



EMC News

July 3, 2001

Volume 8, No. 6

Environmental Review Committee

The Environmental Review Committee convened on June 26, 2001, and discussed the Tompkins County Airport proposals in light of the new maps received from Bob Nicholas, the Airport manager. Unfortunately, the map illustrating the location of three acres of trees proposed for cutting as part of runway "obstruction removal" was not specific enough for the committee to determine if the property was in a Unique Natural Area (UNA-106). It appeared that the three acres were at the edge of or within the northeast corner of the UNA. The committee voted to ask Mr. Nicholas to hold action on this proposal until a clear determination can be made.



In a separate letter, the committee decided to ask Mr. Nicholas if he is aware, as was reported in the press, of paradioxane as a constituent or by-product of any de-icing chemicals used at the airport now or in the last 25 years.

The committee spent the majority of its meeting reviewing the DEIS for the Finger Lakes National Forest Oil and Gas Drilling proposal. It was reported that such drilling operations employ a huge rig which needs solid roads, and that the crews work at a fast and furious pace, although they are not on site for very long. Committee members voiced their concern that this is not a good activity for a property you are trying to protect—one which is used for recreation and quiet enjoyment. The committee discussed Alternative No. 4, the No Action option, and debated what impact it would have on adjacent private lands and what revenue would be lost/produced.

The committee also reviewed Alternative No. 3, which allows no surface occupancy, but leases mineral rights. Some committee members favored this alternative, as there was no advantage seen to surface occupation, which would result in fragmentation of natural habitat, the potential introduction of invasive species and the intrusion of roads. Alternative No. 3 also gave private landowners adjacent to the National Forest more control over the process, while giving the government a financial incentive. Alternative No. 3 was seen as maximizing the income and minimizing the direct impact to the forest. However, as the discussion continued, there were many unresolved questions which the committee will seek to address before finalizing its recommendation.

The committee did determine that this issue is of such significance that a resolution should be presented for consideration by the full EMC at its July meeting. The committee will continue its discussion via e-mail in hopes of reaching a conclusion in time to bring this issue to the full EMC. The deadline for public comment is August 1st. The committee will meet again on July 24th.

Submitted by Barbara Ebert

No August Meeting

Just a reminder everyone, there will not be a General EMC meeting in August!

No Reports Submitted

Chair's Report

Coordinator's Report

County Towers Committee Report

Pesticide Committee Report

Education Committee Report

Executive Committee Report

Water Resources Committee Report